Keeping in touch

News and notes from
the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches

August & September, 1993

UFMCC Takes Leap of Faith

UFMCC made a leap of faith at General Conference XVI in July by taking actions to greatly enhance the denomination's commitment to diversity, internationalism and new leadership.

"This conference was like God's gift back to us after 25 years," Rev. Troy Perry, UFMCC founder and moderator, said upon return from the conference in Phoenix, Arizona.

He set the tone for the conference by declaring in his opening address, "For 25 years, angels of God have watched over UFMCC...You don't know when you will entertain angels."

Nearly 1,200 people registered for the conference, and by the middle of the week the air was full of expectancy. Rev. Nancy Wilson summed up the mood in her sermon: "It feels like we've pushed the 'pause' button on a tape player...like taking a deep breath before taking a leap."

Much of the proceedings were translated into Spanish, but the need for more translation and cross-cultural understanding was an ongoing topic throughout the conference.

By the closing service on July 25, UFMCC delegates from across the globe had filled all three openings on the Board of Elders with people of color, including two who had never served as elder before; voted to hold the 1997 conference in Australia, making it the first outside of North America; and granted voting rights to lay pastors. "This is an incredible leap of faith," Rev. Perry said.❐

UFMCC's new Board of Elders stands together during the closing worship service at General Conference. They are, from left, Revs. Willem Hein, Troy Perry, Nancy Wilson, Don Eastman, Darlene Garner and Hong Tan, and Mr. Larry Rodriguez.

Off To Australia

UFMCC's General Conference will be held in Sydney, Australia in 1997! By a large majority, the lay delegate and clergy houses each voted in favor of this proposal.

Probably no issue at the 1993 General Conference received more prayer than this one, because the delegates carefully weighed the principles of financial stewardship and moving forward as a truly global denomination. The Australian delegation did an outstanding job of educating UFMCC about advantages of holding Conference in Australia, such as the lack of laws restricting people with HIV/AIDS and lesbian and gay people. ❐

Three Elders Elected at Conference

Three people of color — Mr. Larry Rodriguez, Rev. Hong Tan and Rev. Darlene Garner — were elected as elders at General Conference.

Revs. Garner and Tan are both new to the Board of Elders, while Mr. Rodriguez has already served for six years. Rev. Tan is the first elder of Asian descent and Rev. Garner is the first elder of African heritage. At 36, Rev. Tan is also the youngest elder. Rev. Tan was elected on the first ballot, while Mr. Rodriguez and Rev. Garner were elected on the third. This is the first time in the history of the Fellowship that all the elders elected were people of color.

After the voting, the delegates gave a standing ovation to Rev. Freda Smith, UFMCC vice moderator, who was retired by General Conference after 20 years as elder. "Freda Smith will always be remembered by this Fellowship with much affection," Rev. Perry said. "Freda was not only UFMCC's first feminist, but also the first woman ordained and the first woman elder for our denomination. Her ministry doesn't end with her retirement by General Conference, but she will continue as one of the pioneers of our denomination as we move toward the 21st century." Many people praised the grace and dignity with which Rev. Smith preached at the ordination service just hours after the elders election.

Earlier in the week General Conference honored Rev. Jean White, who decided not to stand for re-election after 14 years as elder. "Jean White will be remembered as UFMCC's first professional missionary who has a great burden to see our church truly alive in all the nations," Rev. Perry said.

The Board of Elders confirmed Rev. Perry's nomination of Rev. Nancy Wilson to succeed Rev. Smith as vice moderator of the denomination. "Nancy Wilson was the obvious choice to fill the position of vice moderator," Rev. Perry said. "She has served as an elder since 1976."

"Besides being in shock, I feel immense humility," said

(see Elders, page 3)

Input Asked on Pastoral Leaders

The General Council invites UFMCC members to give their input on how the following policies might affect them. The motion below has been passed by the General Council as a First Reading, and will be submitted for final adoption as a Second Reading at the next Council meeting. Please submit any written responses to the Clerk of the General Council through the International Headquarters by Sept. 15, 1993.

"Moved to receive the report titled 'Recommended Process for Interim Pastoral Leaders' from CCCC, COL and Samaritan College and to refer to CPR Division for adoption as policy and also refer to UFMCC Bylaws Committee to propose Bylaw changes for compliance with the recommended document. Thank COL, CCCC and Samaritan on their excellent joint working on this important issue and include recommendations A-E be considered as FIRST READING. (Attachment #31)

"a) That we continue to hold the highest standards for those who would pastor in UFMCC.

"b) That there be only two categories of persons who pastor in this denomination:

"1) Licensed or ordained clergy

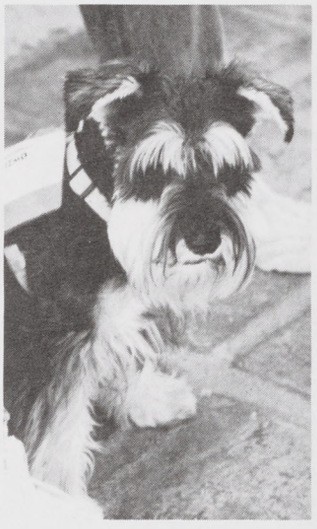
" 2) Interim Pastoral Leaders

"c) That Interim Pastoral Leaders be appointed for a term of one year during which the local church seeks a clergy per-

(see Input, page 6)

Lively worship services at General Conference XVI celebrated the theme, "For All the Nations."

More Spanish-speaking delegates than ever before attended General Conference XVI.



Gizmo was one of several service dogs on duty at the conference.

Keeping in Touch is a monthly publication of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches. We are a church of the lesbian and gay community, open to all. Our mission is to call people to new life through the liberating gospel of Jesus Christ, confront injustice through Christian social action, and create a community of healing and reconciliation.

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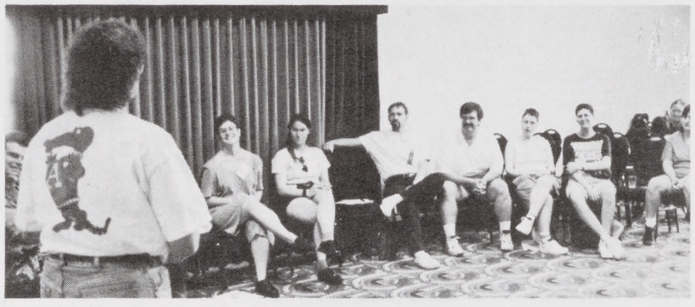
Editorial Board:
Rev. Elder Troy D. Perry, Moderator
Mr. Ravi Verma, Director of Administration
Rev. Kittredge Cherry, Editor

Deadline for each issue: 15th of previous month.

Ms. Nancy Fackrell, Typesetting

Worshippers comemmorated the dead with a cross of red and white carnations at General Conference XVI.



Rev. Nancy Wilson addresses UFMCC's first Youth Assembly July 18.

Elders

(continued from page 1)

Rev. Tan of London, England, European North Sea District Coordinator and founder and former pastor of MCC North London. "I pray we can encourage and empower outreach to all communities and peoples, especially for me, Asian and Pacific Island peoples. God has put us in the desert now to seize this moment."

"I am happy, in shock, surprised — and not," said Rev. Garner, pastor of MCC of Northern Virginia and former pastor of MCC Baltimore, MD. "I hope that we can take even greater steps toward one another, learn to speak in words that others understand, trust one another and embrace the potential that we embody as the people of God." ❐

Conference Round-Up

First Youth Assembly Held

In yet another historic gathering, within a historic General Conference, the youth of UFMCC gathered on July 18 to socialize, worship, learn, strategize, and begin a process that is UFMCC's future. More than 30 people of all ages attended to consider "Where are the young people in UFMCC?"

The youth in UFMCC said that they experience a need for empowerment, having been "sexualized" and "hit on" by older MCCer's, and a lack of credibility in their churches and districts. "Let our voices, our experiences, and our input be heard" was a common thread to Sunday's discussions.

Lay Pastors Seated

After a brief break for individual prayer, a bylaw was passed by both houses which will, for the first time, allow elected lay pastoral leaders of Commissioned and Chartered Churches to vote during District and General Conferences. This historic bylaw change was passed overwhelmingly in the Lay house and by a seven-vote margin in the Clergy house. These new delegates were seated in the Lay house for the July 21 business meeting.

Budget Passes

General Conference approved the 1994-95 budget without amendment — a rare event! The 1994 budget totals $1,385,910 based on projected 10% increase in tithe income to $1,026,150.

World Church Extends

Five new clergy were licensed at General Conference through a special Credentials Review Committee. The licensing of these new clergy doubles the number of indigenous professional ministers serving in UFMCC World Church Extension areas. The new clergy include: Rev. Jorge Sosa, pastor of ICM Mexico City, Mexico; Rev. Rodolfo Albarran, associate pastor of ICM Mexico City, Mexico; Rev. Alphonso Leija, pastor of ICM Cuernavaca, Mexico; Rev. Francisco Barrera, pastor of ICM El Tamarindo, Dominican Republic; and Rev. Tadeus Krasieko, pastor of MCC in Warsaw, Poland. Rev.'s Barrera and Krasieko are the first MCC clergy to be licensed in their countries.

Just Us or Justice?

Guest speakers for the July 23 Ecumenical Breakfast were Rev. Jane Spahr, national lesbian evangelist of the Presbyterian Church (USA), and Rev. James Bell, Executive Director of Interfaith Impact, an ecumenical/interfaith organization of which UFMCC is a new member.

Calling gays and lesbians, "the light of the world," Rev. Spahr told the group of seventy-five, "MCC is talking about what everyone else is afraid to talk about, sex and dying."

"I believe that the church for the most part is more interested in creating a 'just us' church" said Bell, "than in being a justice church." Rev. Kit Cherry, ecumenical field director, convened the first full meeting of UFMCC National Ecumenical Officers and Liaisons July 19, with 11 countries represented.

Rev. Freda Smith, left, was retired by General Conference XVI after 20 years as elder. With her is her spouse, Ms. Kathleen Meadows.

Photo by Ms. Nancy Fackrell

The elders process into the ordination service July 23.

Conference Round-Up

Samaritan Offers Vision

In a lunchtime address July 22 hosted by Samaritan College, Dr. Kenneth B. Smith, president of the Chicago Theological Seminary, spoke to the 75 participants about his vision for the modern church.

His vision is made up of three parts; first, "it is one in which God calls the church to be a preaching and teaching church." Second, "God calls the church to be a caring and inclusive church." Last, "this vision identifies the church as a prophetic community."

Diversity Welcomed

"Welcoming Diversity" was the model presented at a day-long workshop, provided by the Department of People of Colors, July 17. "Discovering those things which make us similar but different" was one of the central goals, Mr. Bernard Barbour, DPOC Executive Director, said.

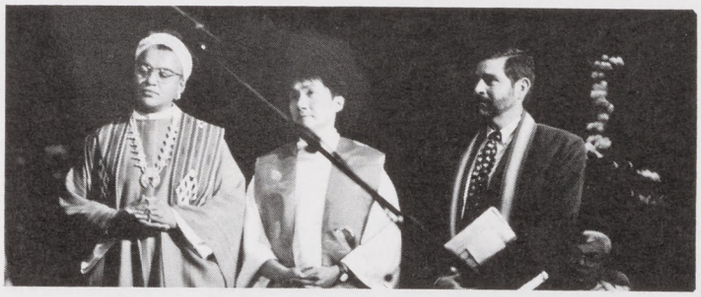
In a passionate speech to the Department of People of Colors luncheon on July 22, Rev. Cecil Williams, pastor of Glide Memorial Methodist Church of San Francisco challenged UFMCC to move past the distractions which prevent us from getting closer to God.

Social Action Funds Raised

At least $15,000 was raised at General Conference for UFMCC to use in legal action to lift the ban against lesbians and gay men in the U.S. military. "Our rights were sacrificed in favor of political expediency," openly gay Presidential advisor David Mixner told the U.S. national meeting. Also addressing the conference on political issues was Dr. Mel White of MCC Dallas, TX, former ghost writer for Rev. Jerry Falwell and others. "The lies of the religious right literally give bashers a license to kill," Dr. White warned.

World Church Extension leaders at this General Conference included, from left, Mr. Zbigniew Czernian, Ms. Catherine Chemarin, Rev. Tomas Garcia, Rev. Caroline Blanco, Rev. Jean White and Rev. Tadeus Krasiejko.

More than 1,100 saints gathered for General Conference XVI.



Elected to the Board of Elders at General Conference XVI are, from left, Rev. Darlene Garner, Rev. Hong Tan and Mr. Larry Rodriguez.

The cross from the first MCC worship service was featured at General Conference in the Archives Exhibit, organized by Ms. Nancy Seaton.

Licensure Changes Announced

Two policies affecting students preparing for UFMCC clergy licensure were set at General Conference:

"Understanding the Bible" and "History of Christian Thought" courses are both being revised into two-part courses. Anyone who completes the courses in their present form by Dec. 31, 1993, will have met the proficiency requirement. Starting Jan. 1, 1994, students must complete Part I and Part II of both courses to fulfill the requirement.

1994 initial licensure candidates who have been unable to complete the academic proficiencies because of course unavailability may apply for an extension to finish the courses by March 1, 1994. The request must be made by Nov. 1, 1993, to the Clergy Credentials and Concerns Committee office.

Conference Round-Up

Programs Teach and Heal

HIV/AIDS programming at General Conference XVI was extremely well-received, particularly by persons with HIV/AIDS who met almost every day of the conference in a "Spiritual Strength for Survival" support group led by Rev. Steve Pieters, field director of AIDS Ministry.

Dr. Alexandra Levine, principal clinical investigator of the Salk Vaccine for HIV, lectured on the issues surrounding HIV vaccine development. Rev. Ken South, speaking to the AIDS Luncheon, praised UFMCC AIDS Ministry for producing "the only religion-based monthly newsletter on AIDS," and for being one of only two denominations in the U.S. with a fulltime staff person for AIDS Ministry. Ms. Alison Arngrim delighted people attending her two workshops, "Humor and Healing," and "Safer Sex Negotiating Skills."

Another Epidemic?

The risk of breast cancer for lesbians is three times that of other women. Dr. Suzanne Haynes, a Ph.D. epidemiologist and lesbian, serving as Chief of the Health Education Section of the U.S. National Cancer Institute, brought the latest data on risk factors and statistics on breast cancer in lesbians in the United States to General Conference.

Dr. Haynes reports that the greatest risk factor for breast cancer in women is aging. Lesbians have three times this risk based on five correlated risk factors: no pregnancies, alcohol consumption, overweight, higher education levels, and lower health screening rates.

Women's Secretariat Meets

"A new reformation of the Christian Church is happening here and now," said Rev. Freda Smith as she addressed more than 80 women from around the world at the July 17 business meeting of the Women's Secretariat. The women of the UFMCC are to be in the front line, she said, in the challenge to the status quo around spirituality, sexism, diversity, and the position of women in our churches. "No one has given us an inch," said Rev. Smith.

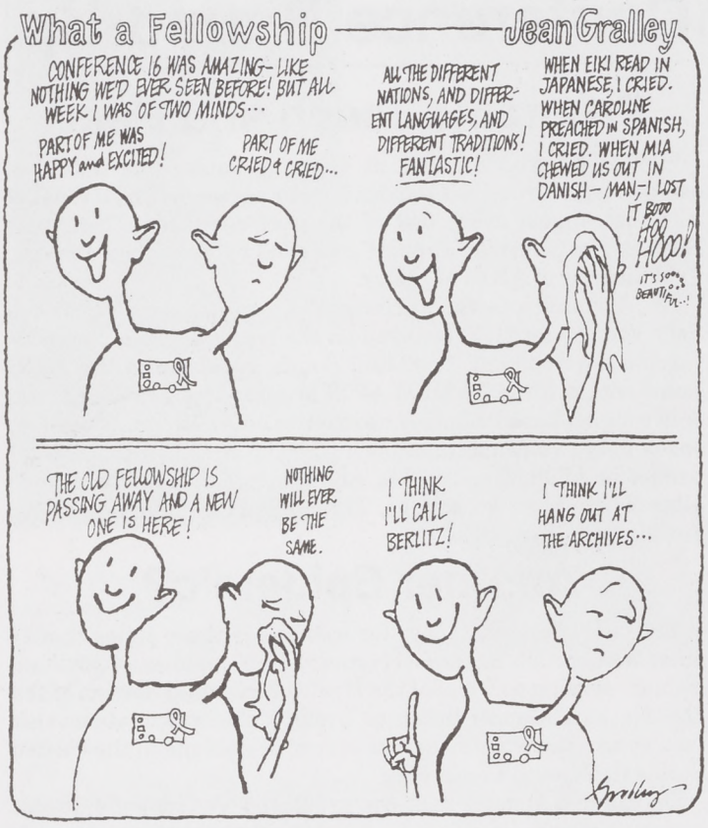
Gay Men Find Hope and Help

Standing Room Only has been the word in workshops directed to the needs of men.

Rev. Ken Martin, co-pastor of MCC Austin, TX spoke to a men-only crowd seated in chairs, on the floor, on window sills and standing in nearly all available remaining space. "The divine gay child in every man is in crisis," he said. "You cannot transcend what is unhealed. You can't go up and over it. You must go down and through."

Thanks to the News Gatherers

"Conference Round-Up" is based on reports by Rev. Lou Kavar, Ms. Doreen Shambrook, Mr. Phil Sheldon, Rev. Jim Richards, Rev. Lori Dick, Mr. Bruce William Harmon, Rev. Andy Sidden, Mr. Joe McQuay, and Mr. Ralph Masek. All photos in this issue of *Keeping in Touch* are by Mr. William Tom unless otherwise noted.


What a Fellowship
Jean Gralley
CONFERENCE 16 WAS AMAZING- LIKE NOTHING WE'D EVER SEEN BEFORE! BUT ALL WEEK I WAS OF TWO MINDS...
PART OF ME WAS HAPPY and EXCITED!
PART OF ME CRIED & CRIED...
ALL THE DIFFERENT NATIONS, AND DIFFERENT LANGUAGES, AND DIFFERENT TRADITIONS! FANTASTIC!
WHEN EIKI READ IN JAPANESE, I CRIED. WHEN CAROLINE PREACHED IN SPANISH, I CRIED. WHEN MIA CHEWED US OUT IN DANISH - MAN, I LOST IT BOOO HOOO!
IT'S SOOO BEAUTIFUL...!
THE OLD FELLOWSHIP IS PASSING AWAY AND A NEW ONE IS HERE!
NOTHING WILL EVER BE THE SAME.
I THINK I'LL CALL BERLITZ!
I THINK I'LL HANG OUT AT THE ARCHIVES...

Input Asked

(continued from page 2)

son to become their pastor. If the search has been unsuccessful or delayed the Interim Pastoral Leader's appointment shall be reviewed at least annually by the District Committee. The appointment can be renewed only once except in extreme circumstances. If after two years the church has not been able to find a pastor a different Interim Pastoral Leader should be selected.

"d) Interim Pastors should be encouraged to take appropriate courses/seminars as they are available. The expenses for these seminars or courses should be borne by the local church. District Committees should seek to provide a connection with a near-by pastor who can serve as a resource person for the Interim Pastoral Leader.

"e) Recognizing the need for clergy in local churches CCCC pledges to continue to encourage qualified clergy to seek and accept calls to vacant pulpits."

Dozens of Clergy Licensed and Ordained

Congratulations to all the following clergy, who were approved for Ordination at General Conference XVI:

Rev. Mia Andersen, ENSD
Rev. Belle Armstrong, SCD
Rev. Frank Beard, MCD
Rev. Charles Bidwell, WCD
Rev. Kenneth Bland, MCD
Rev. Grant Brush, MCD
Rev. Kittredge Cherry, SWD
Rev. Ralph Conrad, GLD
Rev. Phillip Crum, SWD
Rev. Karen Ducham, SED
Rev. Larry Dunlap, NWD
Rev. Darlene Garner, MAD
Rev. Thomas Gashlin, SED
Rev. Peter Helt, MAD
Rev. Beverly Howard, MAD
Rev. Matthew Howard, MCD
Rev. Elizabeth Hulse, NWD
Rev. John Jacobs, SED
Rev. Sherry Kennedy, SED
Rev. Ralph Lasher, SCD
Rev. Roy Lenington, MCD
Rev. Randy Lester, SWD
Rev. Daniel Mahoney, SWD
Rev. Patrick Mechem, NWD
Rev. James Morgan, Jr., NWD
Rev. Jay Neely, GLAD
Rev. Renae Phillips, SCD
Rev. Nori Rost, SWD
Rev. Tamara Schult, GLAD
Rev. Margaret Simpson, ENSD
Rev. Sue Stackhouse, NWD
Rev. Gillian Storey, ENSD
Rev. Tyrone Sweeting, SCD
Rev. Neil Thomas, ENSD
Rev. Buddy Truluck, NWD
Rev. Yolanda Vierra Allen, NWD
Rev. Carol West, SCD

Congratulations to the following clergy who were newly licensed at General Conference XVI:

Rev. Leslie Addison, NWD
Rev. Rodolfo Albarran, WCE
Rev. George Allen, SCD
Rev. J. Francisco Barrera Reyes, WCE
Rev. Caroline Blanco, ENSD
Rev. Isabella Bourne, AD
Rev. Anita Bradshaw, NED
Rev. Ken Ehrke, MAD
Rev. Robert Finch, SCD
Rev. M. Diane Fisher, ECD
Rev. Judy Gingerich, MAD
Rev. Jose Gonzales, SCD
Rev. Mary Hinsey, SCD
Rev. Lynn Johnson, SCD
Rev. NanceLee Jose, SCD
Rev. Gustave Kein, SED
Rev. Tadeus Krasiejko, WCE
Rev. Patricia Langlois, NWD
Rev. Alfonso Leija, WCE
Rev. Helene Loper, GLAD
Rev. Barbara MacLennan, WCD
Rev. Phillip Mathews, SCD
Rev. Martin McGonigle, ENSD
Rev. Eva O'Diam, MAD
Rev. David Park, SED
Rev. Marie Pedrin-Gizoni, SWD
Rev. Joseph Piccari, SWD
Rev. Jerry Seay, SED
Rev. Cindy Solomon, SCD
Rev. Jorge Sosa, WCE
Rev. Cheri Starchman, NWD
Rev. Irene Travis, MAD
Rev. James Ulisse, NWD
Rev. Patricia Voelker, SCD
Rev. Mona West, GLAD

In Memory

Rev. Larry Dunlap

Rev. Larry Dunlap died July 7 after a long struggle with AIDS. He was 38.

Rev. Dunlap was licensed as UFMCC clergy in 1986 and ordained in May 1993. He was a member of River City MCC, Sacramento, CA, from 1981-88, serving as associate pastor there from 1986-88. He was senior pastor of Emmanuel MCC in Spokane, WA, from 1989-90, then was active in New Covenant MCC, Anaheim, CA, and MCC Long Beach, CA. He is survived by his mother, Marlene.

A memorial service is scheduled for Aug. 21 at River City MCC in Sacramento.

Ms. Patricia Underwood

Ms. Patricia Underwood, first woman elected to the board of any Metropolitan Community Church, died of cancer June 27 at her home in Baton Rouge, LA. She was 58.

Ms. Underwood was elected to the MCC Los Angeles, CA board in 1970. She was a pioneer activist for lesbian and gay rights, serving as president of Christopher Street West in Los Angeles.

Services were conducted June 30 by Revs. Troy Perry, Nancy Jo Horvath, Lee Carlton and Glenna Shepherd.

Mr. Wayne Fesler

Mr. Wayne Fesler, active church leader and spouse of Rev. Patrick Mechem, died in Nampa, ID June 18 from AIDS. He was 57.

Since joining UFMCC in 1980, Mr. Fesler was active in deacon and student clergy. He was involved with MCCs in Boise, ID; Salt Lake City, UT; and Salem, OR. Graveside services were held June 20.

Donations may be sent in his honor to MCC Boise, P.O. Box 1959, Boise, ID 83701.

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❒ ANV254 - Cobalt Blue Mug w/platinum logo	9.00
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❒ ANV256 - Conference Photo Album	3.00
❒ UM-0006 - UFMCC Mugs, blue w/white logo	7.00
❒ UM-0018 - Drink Bottles (16oz) w/black logo	2.50
❒ GC093A -25 Greeting Cards-UFMCC logo	10.00
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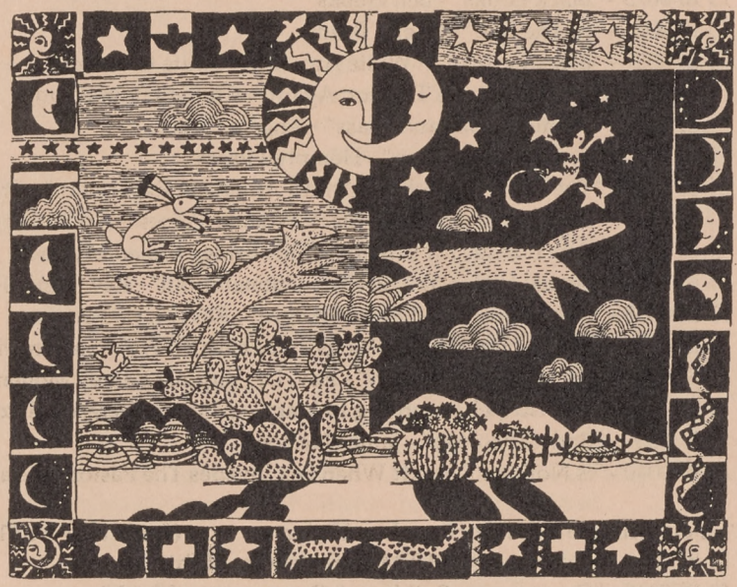
❒ UM0022 - Beach Towel w/conference logo	20.00
❒ UM0023 - Conference Poster	2.00



General Conference Audio Tapes

❒ Complete set of Conference Sermons and Four Plenarys: $60.00

WORKSHOPS , PLENARYS AND SPECIAL MEALS $7.00 each

CHOOSE ANY FOUR OF THE FOLLOWING AND RECEIVE THEM IN CONFERENCE CASSETTE ALBUM: $25.00

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❒ WC9302 - "Using Cell Groups Effectively" -Rev Paul Tucker
❒ WC9303 - "Developing Curriculum for Cell Groups" - Rev. Lou Kavar
❒ WC9304 - "Developing Volunteer Leadership" - Fran Walsh

❒ CW9301 - Dr. Mel White - "Keeping the Religious Right From Doing Wrong"
❒ CW9302 - Dr. Suzanne Haynes - "Breast Cancer in Lesbians: Another Epidemic?"
❒ CW9303 - Rev. Marie Fortune - "Pastor-Congregation Relationships"
❒ CW9304 - Dr. Alexandra Levine - "HIV/AIDS Update"
❒ CW9305 - Rev. Cecil Williams - DPOC Luncheon
❒ CW9306 - Rev. Coni Staff - TWS Luncheon (honoring Philomena Maduka)
❒ CW9307 - Alison Arngrim - AIDS Luncheon
❒ CW9308 - Rev. James Bell and Rev. Jane Spahr - Ecumenical Breakfast
❒ WS9301 - Juanita Majel-Dixon - "Native American Spirituality: An Interpretation"
❒ WS9302 - Rev. Jose Gonzalez - "Liberation and Spirituality" En Espanol
❒ WS9303 - Rev. Nancy Wilson & Panel - "Is Sexism Alive and Well in UFMCC?"
❒ WS9304 - Rev. Steve Pieters & Panel - "New Age vs Traditional..."
❒ WS9305 - Fr. John McNeill - "Men's Sexuality & Spirituality"
❒ WS9306 - Rebecca Sevilla Zevakkis - "New Concepts in Liberation, Mexico"
❒ WS9307 - Fr. John McNeill - "12 Step Spirituality"

{See other side for worship tapes and new merchandise}

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Small Group Studies by Rev. Lou Kavar (Set of all 3 for $15.00)

❒ BP0041 - "Believing: The UFMCC Statement of Faith"	6.00
❒ BP0042 - "Community: Building A Community of Faith"	6.00
❒ BP0043 - "Homosexuality: Not A Sin, Not A Sickness"	6.00

AUDIO Tapes:

❒ AT0003 - "Free To Be" - Marsha Stevens	10.00
❒ AT0004 - "The Best Is Yet To Come" - Marsha Stevens	10.00
❒ AT0005 - "I Still Have A Dream" - Marsha Stevens	10.00

WORSHIP Audio Tapes:

❒ AS0093 - WORSHIP ALBUM: Will include 16 tapes (13 Worship Services and 3 Plenarys) $60.00

Individual Worship Tapes $5.00 each

- ❒ CW9301 - Sun. July 18 - Rev. Elder Willem Hein
- ❒ CW9302 - Mon. July 19 - Rev. Elder Jean White
- ❒ CW9303 - Tues. July 20 - Elder Larry Rodriguez
- ❒ CW9304 - Tues. July 20 - Rev. Elder Don Eastman
- ❒ CW9305 - Wed. July 21 - Rev. Fred Williams
- ❒ CW9306 - Wed. July 21 - Rev. Caroline Blanco
- ❒ CW9307 - Thurs. July 22 - Ms. Marion Briggs
- ❒ CW9308 - Thurs. July 22 - Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson
- ❒ CW9309 - Thurs. July 22 - Rev. Jeri Ann Harvey
- ❒ CW9310 - Fri. July 23 - Mr. Nathan Meckley
- ❒ CW9311 - Fri. July 23 - Rev. Elder Freda Smith
- ❒ CW9312 - Sat. July 24 - Rev. Herbert Evans
- ❒ CW9313 - Sun. July 25 - Rev. Elder Troy D. Perry

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$0 - 2.00	$ .50
$2.01 - 5.00	$ 1.00
$5.01 - 10.00	$ 2.00
$10.01 - 20.00	$ 3.00
$20.01 - 40.00	$ 4.00
$40.01 - 60.00	$ 5.00
$60.01 - 80.00	$ 6.00
$80.01 - 100.00	$ 7.00

Around The Fellowship

Praises

First MCC of Atlanta, GA, has closed on the sale of its building and closed on its new property in northeast Atlanta. **Rev. Reid Christensen** expects the move to take place in October.

The UFMCC iniative to lift the ban on lesbians and gay men in the U.S. minitary has resulted in 32,000 post cards being sent to the White House and members of Congress. In addition, the International Headquarters sent President Bill Clinton several thousand signatures to the "Dallas Declaration" from approximately 30 churches.

Rev. Christine Oscar, pastor of **St. Mary's MCC**, Greensboro, NC, has been invited to join the North Carolina State AIDS Task Force Steering Committee as the clergy representative.

Rev. Stephen Fund, director of World Community Builders, Atlanta, GA; **Ms. Julie Jordan** and **Ms. Gail Smith** welcomed the birth of their daughter, Jessica Rachel Jordan, on June 25.

Sounds of Praise, the choir of **MCC Los Angeles**, CA, was filmed in the upcoming movie "Tales of the City." The choir is directed by **Mr. Tom Carlisle.**

MCC New York, NY, received a $500 grant from UFMCC's Northeast District AIDS Ministry Fund for printing a Spanish edition of a coloring book for children of people with AIDS.

South Florida MCCs were awarded the "Best Organizational Booth" award at the 1993 Pride South Florida Celebration in Ft. Lauderdale June 27. The six churches had a booth 30 feet wide, draped in the colors of the rainbow flag and featuring a large, beautiful peacock made completely of flowers. Churches involved in the outreach included **MCC Key West; Christ MCC**, Miami; **Grace MCC**, Miami Shores; **Sunshine Cathedral MCC**, Ft. Lauderdale; **Church of Our Savior MCC**, Boca Raton; and **MCC of the Palm Beaches.**

An MCC worship service was held at the U.S. National Women's Music Festival in June in Bloomington, IN, thanks to **Ms. Amy Sharer and Ms. Melissa Grombacher** of **Holy Covenant MCC**, Hinsdale, IL. A similar service is planned for the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival in August.

At a historic congregational meeting on June 13, UFMCC's two churches in **Honolulu, HI** voted to reunite after four years of separation. The churches merged June 27. **Revs. Jon Bullock and Maggie Tanis** serve as co-pastors.

Revs. Neil Thomas and David Miller of England received Bachelor of Theology degrees at the Samaritan College graduation July 18 in Phoenix, AZ.

Prayers

Joy of Life MCC, North Chicago, IL, requests prayers following the death of church treasurer **Deborah Christine Fleming** on June 22. She was 32 and had served on the board of the church since its founding two years ago.

Prayers are requested for **Rev. Sylvanus Maduka** and his wife **Philomena** of Nigeria who were unable to attend General Conference because of violence in their homeland.

Transitions

Rev. Pamela White was elected pastor of **MCC Albuquerque**, NM. She assumes her new position after two years in ministry at **River City MCC**, Sacramento, CA, and was formerly a licensed minister in the Assemblies of God denomination.

Rev. Tam Schult has been called to serve as pastor of **MCC Gulfcoast,** Biloxi, MS. She previously pastored **Tri-Cities MCC**, Johnson City, TN, where **Mr. Richard Morefield** is now interim pastor.

Dr. Mel White, who served as a ghost-writer for Revs. Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell of the religious right, was installed as dean of **Cathedral of Hope MCC**, Dallas, TX.

Rev. Shelley Hamilton resigned as pastor of **Vieux Carre' MCC**, New Orleans, LA, effective Aug. 20.

Top 20 Tithes - June 1993

1.	Cathedral of Hope MCC, Dallas, TX	US $	6,018.11
2.	MCC Washington, Washington, DC		2,288.19
3.	MCC of the Resurrection, Houston, TX		2,158.43
4.	MCC Toronto, Ontario, Canada	CAN$	1,971.74
5.	MCC Long Beach, Long Beach, CA		1,770.90
6.	MCC San Francisco, San Francisco, CA		1,583.77
7.	St. Luke's MCC, Jacksonville, FL		1,282.99
8.	Harvest MCC, Denton, TX		1,060.44
9.	First MCC of Kansas, Wichita, KS		1,058.79
10.	River City MCC, Sacramento, CA		1,034.31
11.	Church of the Trinity MCC, Sarasota, FL		994.76
12.	Christos MCC, Toronto, Ontario, Can	CAN$	931.93
13.	MCC New York, New York City, NY		920.10
14.	MCC Hartford, Hartford, CT		778.56
15.	Agape' MCC, Ft. Worth, TX		736.77
16.	Maranatha Fellowship MCC, Houston, TX		733.57
17.	MCC Albuquerque, Albuquerque, NM		723.64
18.	MCC Key West, Key West, FL		680.75
19.	MCC Louisville, Louisville, KY		676.84
20.	Church of Our Savior MCC, Boca Raton, FL		654.20

{These figures reflect the 10 percent of each local church's monthly income that is reported to Fellowship headquarters.}

Top 20 Per Capita - June 1993

1.	MCC Hartford, Hartford, CT	US $	129.76
2.	MCC of the Disciples, Washington, DC		43.06
3.	MCC Silverlake, Los Angeles, CA		42.23
4.	MCC/Lower Mainland, Mapleridge, BC	CAN$	36.79
5.	River of Life MCC, Richland, WA		29.96
6.	MCC of Greater Hayward, San Lorenzo, CA		27.94
7.	Harvest MCC, Denton, TX		25.74
8.	Maranatha Fellowship MCC, Houston, TX		25.30
9.	Christos MCC, Toronto, Ontario, Can.	CAN$	25.12
10.	MCC Long Beach, Long Beach, CA		24.94
11.	Russian River MCC, Guerneville, CA		24.84
12.	MCC of the Gentle Shepherd, Vancouver, WA		24.69
13.	Open Arms MCC, Rochester, NY		24.67
14.	MCC Albuquerque, Albuquerque, NM		23.65
15.	New Life MCC, Berkeley, CA		23.31
16.	MCC Ottawa, Ottawa, Ontario, Can.	CAN$	21.88
17.	Open Door MCC, Boyds, MD		20.32
18.	MCC Ocean of Life, Costa Mesa, CA		20.11
19.	MCC San Jose, San Jose, CA		19.80
20.	New Life MCC, Charlotte, NC		19.78

{These figures reflect average individual weekly offerings to the local church.}

UFMCC Can Provide Ethical Models

By Mr. Phil Sheldon

Rev. Marie Fortune, a renowned ethicist and United Church of Christ minister, spoke about the importance of sexual and professional ethics on Sat. July 24, at UFMCC's General Conference XVI. All churches, including the UFMCC, must clearly state and honor the highest ethical standards, she said. "We must keep the Church a safe place for all people at all times!"

In preparing to address UFMCC members, Rev. Fortune talked with 10 lesbian and gay spiritual leaders. She identified several urgent issues which UFMCC churches share with other denominations, and also unique issues which UFMCC people face. Ultimately, however, "the issue is harassment: the sexual orientation of both the perpetrator and the victim are irrelevant," she said.

Rev. Marie Fortune

As for those who are lesbians or gay men, Rev. Fortune acknowledged the temptation to reject all ethical standards, since prevailing sexual ethics are "less than useless." However, "the opposite of bad ethics is not NO ethics, it is GOOD ethics, and we must create them together!" she emphasized.

Among the special challenges faced by UFMCC clergy are the need to be public people in both the church and the community, and the need to balance "dual relationships" in which we interact in multiple ways with the same people. For example, a clergyperson's doctor may also be a congregant, and this dualism can affect each one's ability to help the other in a detached, professional manner.

Rev. Fortune concluded by offering a series of functional guidelines, which can help maintain high standards in the pastoral role. These include:

1) Take good care of our own needs, including rest, food and fun, in order to better protect our boundaries with other people.

2) Keep dual relationships to a minimum, to make it easier to deal with supervisory and counseling issues.

3) As a general rule, look outside the congregation for sexual partners, to prevent conflicts of interest.

4) Make regular opportunities for clergy counseling with colleagues, especially those who can help us critically evaluate our situations.

5) Pray without ceasing, by maintaining regular time for prayer and scriptural study.

In Rev. Fortune's view, following these steps will help UFMCC to maintain a clarity of vision and to become a model for mainline churches. "We are called to this challenge by Scripture!"

Mr. Sheldon is a long-time UFMCC member and is currently an Asian business consultant and cross-cultural educator based in Ridgewood, NJ.

Classifieds

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GAY MENS BOOK SERVICE hard to find out of print titles in 94 subject areas, 40 pg. catalog $3. Paths Untrodden, Box 3245, Grand Central Station, NY, NY 10163.

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Marsha Stevens' new album "I Still Have a Dream"-tape or CD, and Video - "In Concert-25th anniversary" are now available, as well as "Free To Be" tapes and "Best is Yet" tapes and CD's; tapes-$10, CD-$15, Video-$20 from BALM Publishing, PO Box 1981, Costa Mesa, CA 92628.

MERCHANDISE

The MARCH has passed but the commitment lives on. This historic moment was captured on a unification T-shirt, presented on national television, showing our solidarity and strength. This symbolic white shirt with "TOGETHER AS ONE" printed in black inside pink, purple, and blue triangles was $20, now only $5. XL only. Orders to F.I.S. PO Box 8069, Wooster, Ohio 44691.

ORGANIZATIONS

Prodigy Computer Network for MCCers and Friends. All welcome, laity encouraged. Sue Read - ID#RMMSØ5A/phone 612-822-2470.

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

GOOD BODY, almost 21, had some hard knocks, chartered, seeks partner. MCC Detroit may be the pulpit for you. Interested candidates inquire: Pastoral Search Committee, MCC Detroit, P.O. Box 836, Royal Oak, MI 48268.

MCC Augusta, GA, a committed, Commissioned church, seeks a pastor to help us grow. Write: Pastoral Search, MCC Augusta, 609 Shartom Dr., Augusta, GA 30907.

Flock seeking shepherd - Divine Redeemer MCC in Glendale (adjacent to Los Angeles) is looking for a pastor. We've enjoyed a catholic-style of Sunday worship and want to keep it up. Interested? Send requests for more info to: Pulpit Search Committee, c/o J. Kloes, 3206 Silverado Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90039.

The Board of Elders will be considering appointments in the following areas: Board of Pensions, Clergy Credentials and Concerns Committee, Elders Nominating Committee, Ecumenical Witness and Ministry, Faith Fellowship and Order, World Church Extension, and the Judiciary. For more information, contact the Clerk of the Board of Elders at UFMCC Headquarters.

The European North Sea District seeks nominations for the post of District Coordinator. The position is currently part time and we are seeking to work towards a full time compensated post. Currently the salary is French Fr 55,250/ German DM 15,792/ Danish Krona 60,859/ US $9,750/ UK 6,500. In addition all travel costs are paid for. Elections for the post will take place November and duties will commence on 1st January 1994. The ENSD currently has 20 churches in 5 countries reflecting 4 different languages. Letters of application detailing relevant experience should be sent to Ms. Hilary Clinton, Nominations Chair, 127 Ardath Road, King's Norton, Birmingham, B38 9PG England by the 5th of September.

The position of District Coordinator in the Great Lakes District will be open for election at the Spring 1994 District Conference. Anyone interested in applying should send a letter of inquiry to the District Clerk (Deb Dysert, 2149 S. Garfield Dr., Indianapolis, IN 46203) by Sept. 1, 1993. The current District Coordinator will be reapplying for the position.

Straight & Bi Group Forms

The Straight and Bisexual Network of UFMCC met at General Conference XVI, Phoenix, AZ, July 19-25, and discussed their concerns, hopes and dreams as a group. They are interested in contacting other straight and bisexual members of UFMCC to share stories and support each other.

They would like to ask each congregation within UFMCC to include information about the network in newsletters and/or Sunday bulletins. For more information, persons may contact: Alison Warder, BM Handshake, London WCIN3XX United Kingdom; Patricia Piccari, 11432 Banner Ave., Garden Grove, CA 92643; Deborah Ivins, c/o MCC Augusta, 609 Sharton Dr., Augusta, GA 30907.

Next Deadline for Keeping in Touch —Sept. 15—